

## ANCIENT GAGS IN O.D. APPEAL IN ARGONNE

Barnstormers Play to Full Houses Right at Edge of Battle

### MAYOR OFFERS APOLOGIES

But Interpreters Explain That Whistling Is Not a Manifestation of Displeasure

The play actors who have come over here to entertain us will go back home completely hardened to the roughest barnstorming the American stage can provide. The road and the long circuit for one-night stands will have no terrors for them.

When the show goes stranded in some such tank town as Puxtanawney, Pa., when the manager, after pocketing the twelve dollars left in the till, says sorrowfully that he will not be able to pay the salaries, when they are faced with the fact that if they ever hope to get back to Broadway they will have to walk, these thespians of the A.E.F. will laugh and say to one another:

"This is nothing compared to the wild show when we played the Argonne circuit in 1918."

The troupe headed by Margaret Mayo, the author of "Baby Mine" and "Twin Beds," has been playing in the Forest of Argonne itself, playing with the boys applauding from the trees, playing in the rain and the fog, and the boys will have to voice their appreciation and their clothes are so full of a number of things that they don't like to talk about it.

#### Miss Mayo Is Gas Case

The other day, for the amusement of a bunch of doughboy replacements on the way into the line, the Mayo Shock Unit performed on a stranded truck, with a dressing room made out of a piece of tarpaulin. Unfortunately, some tear gas lurked in the seams of that tarpaulin, and just as Miss Mayo stepped forward to say something awfully funny to start the show going, she paused, gazed miserably about her, and burst into tears. The startled audience, who thought that somehow Jane Cowd had got into the bill by mistake, then watched while she departed at full speed for the nearest dressing station. Recently, by way of a change, the Mayo show played in a real theater, a battered old one house built by the Gauls in a town just below the Argonne. The theater had been closed since the war began, but it was hood open for this occasion and an infantry corporal was found who admitted he could work the curtains. The house was packed to the doors, doughboys and politicians, one another for the best seats in the boxes and in the front row of the gallery—yes, the gallery.

#### All the Old Hokus

All the old hokus, jasho and gravy known to vaudeville can be found in the show. It is easy to take the old jokes and dress them up in O.D. If you want to make fun of some one, call him a second lieutenant. If you want to use the old cracks about Brooklyn, Yonkers or Red Bank, New Jersey, why, use them. Only substitute Blois and a base port.

The mere fact that you wear the badge of the Red Triangle is no reason, apparently, why you shouldn't skate on the thin ice of the naughty-naughty. The Mayo outfit is called Shock Unit because, except for one performance in the Tuilleries Gardens at Paris, it has always played at the front and not in the rear. Its little jokes are of such a character that the founders of the Y. M.C.A. must turn in their graves at each performance. But they go big with the democratic Army.

For example, the fun is hitting a pretty swift punch when one of the bunch—Will Morrissey, perhaps—mentions having been with the Yanks in Italy.

#### Everything but the Peanuts

"Ah!" says Miss Mayo, "and when you were in Italy, did you touch Florence?"

Sensation! When Morrissey can be heard above the uproar he answers in the negative.

"But it's a good idea," he admits. Then he and Tommy Gray have to tell a story reflecting on the French. They get the assurance of the Yanks present to stand by them if they offend in the house started anything. Afterwards, somewhat haltingly, comes their account of the Frenchman seen with a ladder in the corridor of a Paris hotel, peering through the transom of a lady's chamber, peeping, what is more, for two solid hours.

Miss Mayo is scandalized. And surprised. She thought, she says, the French were always so polite.

#### The Poor Shavelheads!

"Well, this fellow wasn't," says Morrissey. "Why, he stayed there all that time and there were 18 second lieutenants waiting at the foot of the ladder!"

Pandemonium! It certainly sounds like the good old days to hear a gallery full of Americans, all stamping and cheering and whistling their approval. There is everything there but the peanuts. They roar with delight when lovely Lois Meredith gazes upon them, and the roof threatens to come off the theater when Elizabeth Brice, comes dancing to the footlights, swinging her shoulders and putting all the pep in the world into her old songs. Just as she used to in the Keith houses back home, so here at the front she sings "Dazz around, buzz around" and "Come, let's settle down" till the boys fairly split all ears with their whistling. They made the old theater rock on its ancient foundations, and Miss Mayo retired that night an exhausted but satisfied woman.

#### The Morning After

Next morning, while she was trying to negotiate a bit of bread without a bread ticket—it can't be done—her breakfast was halted by a visitation. Some high official, a functionary, sporting one of the few silk hats left in Argonne, called upon her, bowed eight times, made a speech about "hands across the sea" and "just au bout," and then assured her that the French people were deeply grieved by the rudeness to Miss Brice evidenced the night before. They wished her to understand, he said, that none of the Frenchmen present had had any part in that outrageous whistling. Furthermore, they could not account for such a manifestation of displeasure, for, he said, Miss Brice's performance was "tout a fait charmante, épatante, délicieuse."

Four interpreters were hastily summoned and it was thoroughly explained that whereas in France whistling means disapproval, in America it's just another way of saying, "Keep it up, Elizabeth, your show's great."

## IT'S NO USE, BILL—



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## WOODCRAFT EXPERTS TO HARDEN ALL A.E.F.

Inside Lessons on Building Lean-To and Fires Now on Books

### WINTER HINTS GIVEN OUT

Importance of Drying Clothing as Health Precaution Emphasized by Chief Surgeon

American soldiers, fighting a day-after-day battle against General Winter, are going to use the tactics of Leatherstocking and other less classical, but equally hard characters of the great American backwoods in the days when Army surgeons were scarce, and Spanish flu had not been invented.

An unwritten code of out-door living tactics is to be taught the A.E.F. Soldiers experienced in woodcraft are asked by the Chief Surgeon to teach their less experienced comrades the inside lessons of building lean-to shelters, huts and campfires. And the Chief Surgeon, in a bulletin just issued, is telling commanding officers and medical officers the precautions that should be taken to protect the health of the Army.

#### Pup Tent Beats Barracks

Crowding is one thing that is being emphasized. Here is other advice: A pup tent properly made is a much better place than a barracks in which too many men live. Splitting in crowded places is apt to send more men to the hospital than a German attack.

Don't build a big camp fire. An Indian will build a little fire and keep warm, where a white man will build a big fire and remain cold. Build a small fire and stand over it, rather than a big fire from which you must keep away. Before building a shelter, note the direction in which the wind is blowing and have the entrance face the opposite direction.

It is best to have the fire inside the shelter. The primitive fireplace is built with walls of soil on each side and is not over two feet wide. A flue may be made of stone, soil or green boughs. The side of a bank or cliff is a good place to build a chimney. Wood should be cut in small pieces.

#### Wet Feet on Blacklist

The importance of drying clothing that has been wet is another point which the Chief Surgeon, who ought to know, is trying to impress on everybody. He points out that clothing is primarily intended to keep the natural heat of the body from escaping to the air. When clothing is wet it permits the body heat to pass off easily. Lowered vitality results and the wet man may fall sick.

Wet feet particularly cause sickness. And time spent in changing or drying socks and shoes is always worth while. Oiling or greasing the feet is recommended.

## AERIAL NEWSBOYS PEDDLE ARMY PAPER

Copies of Stars and Stripes Dropped to Men in Argonne Fight

THE STARS AND STRIPES for October 4 were delivered on the day of publication to the men in the front line in Argonne by American pilots flying Liberty planes.

All the different types of air-craft in the American service, bombing planes, observation planes, chasse planes, aided in the distribution that day and the next of some 2,200 copies, done into little bundles of ten and scattered along the line all the way from the western edge of the Argonne forest itself to Brioules on the Meuse.

Some were dropped from a height of 1,000 feet, some were scattered over the lines by flyers swooping so low that they almost scraped the tree tops. They could see the doughboys rush for the papers and then look up to wave their appreciation. Just to be facetious, and for the general good of the German soul, a few copies were carried far back into "Germany" and dropped around Meuzon and Sedan.

For a while the shell-torn roads through that devastated region were in such shape and the forward movement of the guns so urgent that all but the most vital traffic was sternly banished from the highways. Ammunition and rations—those had the right of way and if the airplanes had not volunteered their services, the papers could not have got up where they were fresh.

Some of the most celebrated flyers in our service—pilots who wear the D.S.C. and ace like Lieutenant Cook and Lieutenant Rickenbacker—were among the aerial newsboys of THE STARS AND STRIPES that day.

## COLONEL AS PILOT, GENERAL PASSENGER

S.O.S. Chief Pays Real Flying Visit to Distant Aero Field

Sheridan had to use a horse in his famous 40-mile dash to the battlefield, and the Duke of Wellington had to use a horse to hurry from the ballroom in Brussels to Waterloo—but in this ultra-modern war when a major general decides to take a little business trip of 70 miles or so and happens to be in a hurry, all he has to do is to pick up the phone and call for his airplane.

At least, it was just as simple as that last week when Major General Harbord, commanding general of the S.O.S., decided he wanted to go from his headquarters office in Tours to an aviation field about 70 miles away.

"Why, I'll drive you over, sir," said Col. Walter G. Kilner, chief of air training.

Everything Except the Bumps

In a little while two Liberty motors waited on the grass of a flying field near Tours. Into one climbed Major General Harbord and Colonel Kilner. Lieutenant Fielding S. Robinson, the general's aide, mounted the other, with Colonel Fitzgald, commander of the air field, at the wheel. Two Liberty motors roared and two Liberty planes bounded from the grass. The planes circled for height and then headed for the field.

Four thousand feet in the air, 70 miles over the Touraine—the plateau and chaux district of middle France—rode the general and his party. And 40 minutes after they had started they circled back to earth and landed, to receive the greetings of flying officers and air mechanics.

"Great trip—air, scenery and everything except the bumps," said the general, stretching his legs. In honor of the general's sudden visit, *The Plane News*, edited and published by men at the flying field, got out a special edition with a story of the journey, and the inspection party carried copies back to Tours when they departed some hours later.

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## BIG AVIATION FIELD IS QUICKLY SHIFTED

Hangars and Complete Paraphernalia Set Up in Seven Days

Another claimant for honors in the speed-and-efficiency contest, behind the lines. This time it is the specialists. The achievement constitutes the moving from one district to a spot a good distance away, of an aviation field; the dismantling of six hangars and eight barracks; hauling of barracks, hangars and all incidental paraphernalia to the new station—all within seven days.

"And," supplements the report made by Lieut. Wm. G. Peny, under whose direction the work was done, "this does not take into consideration the fact that it was accomplished with eight old Mexican border trucks which were about ready to retire, and the additional detail of plowing and leveling bad paths of the field itself."

The Aero Squadron Crew, . . . received orders to move at 9:30 one night; by 4 in the morning they were on the way, machinery, tractors and all. The orders were to get the new field ready for reconstruction work to be done "without unnecessary delay." Four o'clock reveille and breakfast, chocolate and bread or doughnuts at 9 a. m., dinner at noon, more chocolate at 5 p. m. and supper at 9 p. m. was the program for the week.

### THE PRACTICAL SIDE

Homesick Hubert: Gee, I wish I'd married the lil girl before I left the States!

Unhappily Oscar (who did): Huh, cheer up. If you had they'd be sticking you for a compulsory allotment.

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